

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A zoom lens comprising:

a first lens unit having positive optical power, a second lens unit having negative optical power and a magnification varying function, and at least one other lens unit, arranged in order from the object side, wherein

the first lens unit includes, in order from the object side, a first negative lens element whose first surface at the extreme object side is concave toward the object side, and a second negative lens element, and at least one positive lens element which is closer to an image plane side than the second negative lens element, and satisfies an following condition:

$$-1.28 < f_n / f_1$$

where f_n denotes the composite focal length of the first negative lens element and the second negative lens element, and f_1 denotes the focal length of the first lens unit.

2. The zoom lens according to Claim 1, satisfying the following condition:

$$v_1 - v_2 > 8$$

$$v_3 > 60$$

where v_1 and v_2 denote Abbe's numbers of the first negative lens element and the second negative lens element,

respectively, and v_3 denotes Abbe's number of the positive lens element which is disposed closer to the image plane side than the second negative lens element and the closest to the object side within the first lens unit excluding the first negative lens element and the second negative lens element.

3. The zoom lens according to Claim 1, wherein

the second negative lens element and the positive lens element, constituting part of the first lens unit, are cemented together.

4. The zoom lens according to Claim 1, satisfying the following condition:

$$hw < hz$$

where hw and hz denote the maximum heights of off-axis light rays at the maximum image height, which pass through the first surface of the first lens unit when the zoom lens is focused to infinity at the wide-angle end and at a focal length of $fw \times Z^{1/4}$, respectively, and fw denotes a focal length of the entire system of the zoom lens at the wide-angle end.

5. The zoom lens according to Claim 1, satisfying the following conditions:

$$Z > 10$$

$$fw / IS < 0.75$$

where Z denotes a zooming ratio, fw denotes a focal length of the entire system at the wide-angle end, and IS denotes an image size.

6. The zoom lens according to Claim 1, wherein

the first lens unit which includes a first lens component having negative optical power and a second lens component with positive optical power and has a focusing function, wherein

the first lens component includes, in order from the object side, a first negative lens element whose first surface at the extreme object side is concave toward the object side, a second negative lens element, and at least one positive lens element, and is fixed when focusing, and

the second lens component includes a plurality of positive lens elements, and moves on the optical axis when focusing.

7. An image pickup apparatus comprising:

a zoom lens according to Claim 1, and

a photoelectric conversion element which receives and photoelectrically converts an object image formed by the zoom lens.